



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

ADVOCATE OF PEACE.

JANUARY, 1852.

EFFECTS OF A BAD PRECEDENT:

OR, LEGACIES FROM OUR WAR WITH MEXICO.

A BAD example is prolific of mischief. Such was our war with Mexico; a direct and ominous contradiction of our whole previous policy; a precedent which we expected from the first to find drawing after it a long train of evils. Nor were we disappointed; for a large body of the soldiers, engaged in that infamous war, did not get, on their way back toward their homes in different parts of the Union, farther than New Orleans, before they enlisted anew in a marauding expedition, under the name of a Buffalo Hunt, to wrest from Mexico another Texas lying between the Rio Grande and the Sierra Madre. Our government, in whose service they had learned these bad habits, promptly interposed to arrest the villainous scheme; but these drilled and disciplined bandits, having once got in legalised war a taste for pillage and blood, could not lose it all at once, and consequently held themselves ready for any enterprise that gave promise of pay, or hope of plunder.

Nor did they wait in vain. There was ere long concocted a plot to revolutionize the island of Cuba; and an attempt was made to carry it into execution. The vigilance and energy of our government defeated the conspirators; but the last year, in spite of all its precautions, they renewed the attempt, and went so far as to land on that island between five and seven hundred troops, scooped for the most part from the offscourings of our Mexican war. It is quite remarkable that the main body of these buccaniers under Lopez, were soldiers returned from our war in Mexico, where they had caught the spirit, and formed the habits, which fitted them for this lawless, piratical invasion of Cuba.

The upshot of this ill-starred expedition is familiar to every reader; but the mischief of our national precedent in the war with Mexico did not end here, nor can human sagacity foresee where it will ever end. The virus has been infused into the heart of the people; and nobody can tell how long the leprosy will last, or how far it will extend. In a population like

that of our South-Western States, it spreads like a moral plague, or like a hurricane of fire over a western prairie. The powder is there; and only a spark is needed to kindle an explosion. A strange fondness for lawless and bloody adventures still lingers in the hearts of those whom our government sent forth to the work of pillage and slaughter in Mexico; and when the scheme of revolutionizing the eastern states of that republic was revived, its leaders found ready agents for its execution among the volunteers returned from that war. All these expeditions, so dangerous to our peace, and so disgraceful to our national character, are legitimate fruits of our abominable crusade against Mexico.

Such schemes, if sufficiently important and promising for the purpose, are drawn at length into the issues of party politics. Here is the climax of the mischief. A band of private volunteers, without authority, without resources, or any principle of permanent cohesion, can hardly expect to overturn a government, or even to revolutionize a single province; but, if they can make it a hobby on which demagogues at home shall hope to ride into power, they may succeed in accomplishing their purpose, and entailing on the country perhaps an interminable train of evils.

Here are two specimens of such political profligacy. A politician, once a Member of Congress, and a Governor of one of our Western States, writes, in view of the Cuban expedition then in progress, to a paper of his own party, thus:—"I am much pleased to see that you have stirred up the dry bones of the ——— newspaper on the *Cuba* subject. The course, in my judgment, is to rouse the people for true and genuine liberty;"—the popular pretext for revolutionizing Cuba, just to make it in time one of our own Slave-States;—"and by this course the people will *force the government into war*;"—the grand ultimate expedient for accomplishing such schemes of high-handed and wholesale villainy.—"I see the Democratic papers have taken up for Cuba all over the Union, and of course the Whigs are strong on the other side. *This Cuba subject will be a strong element in the next Presidential contest.* * * * I will vote for no man opposed to Cuba."

All this proved to be premature; but, when the Cuban plot was defeated, this class of desperate political adventurers turned to Mexico. "It cannot be doubted," says a western paper, "that since the annexation of Cuba is again indefinitely postponed, the idea of Mexico rises with so much the greater activity. The Texas journals have already manifested for some time a hostile tone towards Mexico, which power will not recognize the fugitive-slave law, nor surrender runaways;"—the old favorite project of war, if need be, for the benefit of slavery. "We cannot doubt, therefore, that the annexation agitation will now be powerfully driven in that quarter."—See N. Y. Weekly Tribune, for Oct. 4, 1851.

To these statements we might add the reported attempts by marauding expeditions from California to revolutionize, and ultimately annex to the United States, another portion of Mexico on the Pacific, and also the Sandwich Islands. These rumors lack confirmation, but are so very like what was done in the case of Texas and the Mexican war, as to excite little surprise; and the facility with which they gain currency and partial credence, shows the malign influence of those precedents.

Here are some of our sources of danger ; and good men, lovers of their country and their species, cannot be too intently on the look-out against such reckless schemes for involving us in war. We have among us combustible material enough to set a whole continent on fire ; and we should take good heed that no spark is ever applied to it.

THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT ON STIPULATED ARBITRATION.

More than two years ago, Richard Cobden, at the request of some two hundred thousand petitioners, brought for the first time before the British House of Commons the great question of systematic arbitration for the settlement of International Disputes in the form of this proposition :

“ That an humble address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that she will be graciously pleased to direct her principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to enter into communication with foreign powers, inviting them to concur in treaties binding the respective parties, in the event of any future misunderstanding which cannot be arranged by amicable negotiation, to refer the matter in dispute to the decision of arbitrators.”

A proposition that, for a wonder, secured eighty-one votes in its favor ; a better beginning than was ever made before in the House of Commons on any similar question. It was a unique discussion for the British Parliament ; and the degree of respectful attention paid to the subject by the members in general, but more especially by the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary, gave so much interest and importance to the debate, that we shall here copy some of its main points :—

EXTRACTS FROM COBDEN'S SPEECH.—I stand here humbly representing two distinct classes, both of some importance in the community. The first is that influential body of Christians who repudiate the doctrine of resorting to war in any case, whether for offensive or defensive purposes ; and the next is that numerous portion of the middle classes, who, abhorring war, are a greater party than at any period of our history, who desire that some precautions should be taken, and, if possible, some guarantee, against future wars. These two classes have found common ground on which to unite without compromising their principles. It is not necessary that any one who accedes to the motion, should be of opinion that they are not justified as Christians, under any circumstances, in resorting to war in self-defence. It is only necessary that they should regard war as a great calamity, which it is desirable should, if possible, be obviated. If I propose what is likely to have that effect, you should vote for my motion.

Now, what is it I propose ? I assume that no one in this house would sanction war, unless it were imperatively demanded on their part in defence of their honor and their just interests. I take it that no one here would fail to repudiate war, or would invite it, unless called for by such motives. I take it that not one man in this house would not repudiate war, or would invite it, if the honor and just interests of the country could be preserved through some other medium. My object is to see whether we cannot devise some means whereby war may be dispensed with ; and my proposition is that we should resort to that mode in communities to which individuals resort themselves. I want to carry out the principle recognised in thousands of other cases, that the intercourse between communities is nothing but the intercourse between individuals in the aggregate. Why may there not exist an agreement between this country and France, or between this